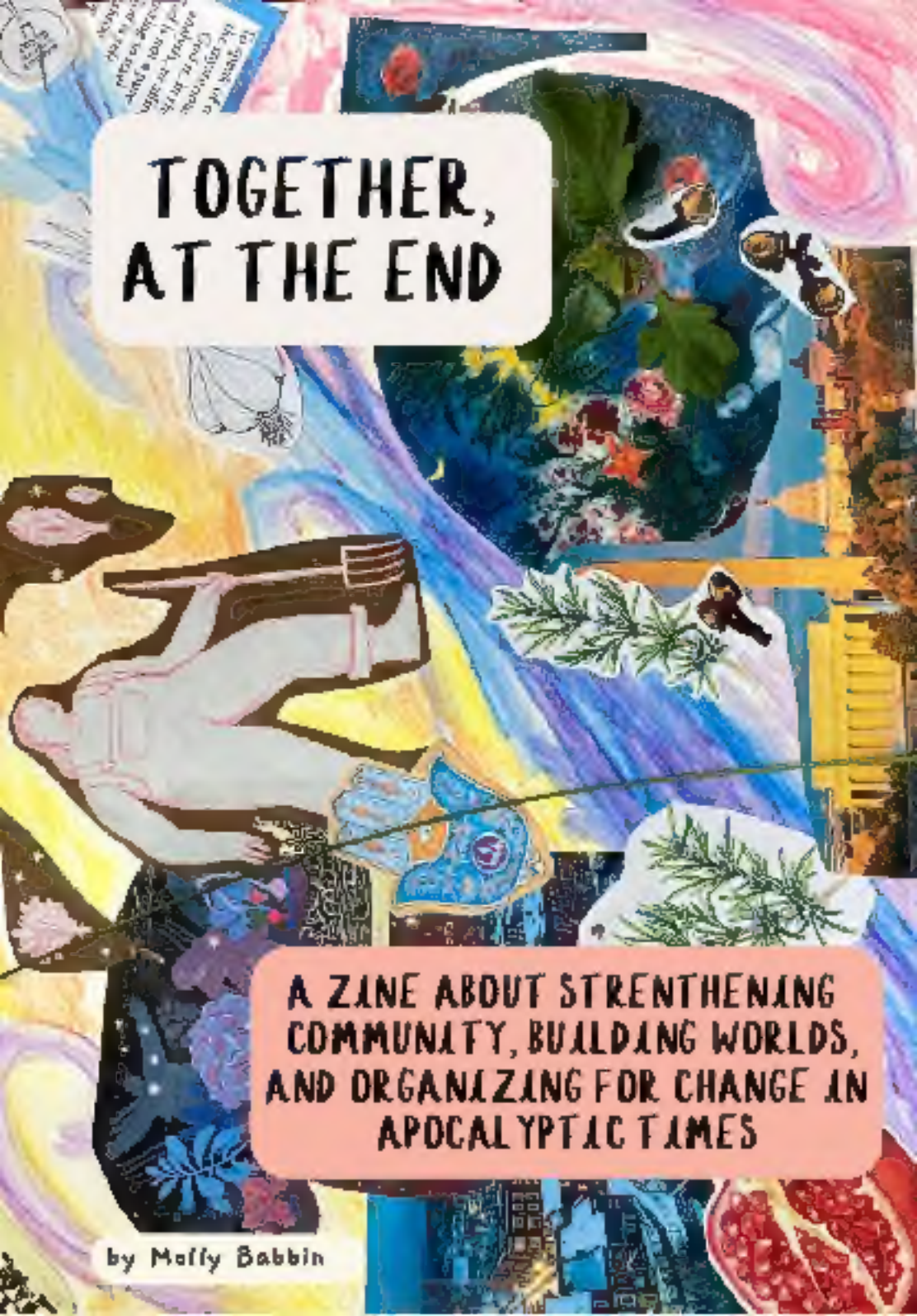




TOGETHER, AT THE END

A ZINE ABOUT STRENGTHENING
COMMUNITY, BUILDING WORLDS,
AND ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE IN
APOCALYPTIC TIMES

by Molly Babbin

THANK YOU!!!!

I want to give a HUGE thank you to Minna Brown and the Climate Action Capacity Project Fellowship at Middlebury College for giving me endless support in making this cine. Thank you to the Middlebury sociology department for providing me with the opportunity to start this project as an independent study ~ and to Prof Jamie McCallum for advising the 3-term project. I also extend enormous gratitude to everyone who took the time to share their ideas and thoughts with me through informal interviews as part of the project, who have been kept anonymous for privacy. Thank you to Charlotte Babbin for their exceptional copy-editing skills, as well as the brilliance of Megan Brakeley and Andra Dyaga, who have specific ideas/quotes featured in the following pages. And thank you to Ollie Buzzard and Kamryn You Mak for sharing their art, and to Kai Addison who also shared many helpful pieces of wisdom and advice from her experiences. I also want to shout out the organization Spring Up, whose modules and training gave me much of the knowledge and direction that led me to and through this project.

This cine was created on stolen lands. The Abenaki, Haddamassets, Quinipiac, & Wappinger nations are the original caretakers of the homes I lived in throughout this project. I quote in this cine ideas from an organizer in the NDN Collective ~ an organization that builds power in Indigenous communities for Land Back and climate justice. I encourage those who are not Indigenous to take time to learn about and donate to ndncollective.org, and/or Indigenous-led organizations where you live.



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INTRODUCTION: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times. -
Clara Pinkola Estés



Art by Molly Bobbin

I began this zine in the search for a new roadmap. It is 2023, and the last several pandemic years have reinforced to many of us the truth that these are apocalyptic times. Coming-of-age and curious in these years, I feel both deep uncertainty and a huge amount of possibility for what we will build from the pieces of our fractured society and dying planet. There are histories of the end of the world we can learn from. Those who have been impacted by colonialism, racism, state-sanctioned violence, and imperialism have faced apocalypse for a long time.



The content and inspiration for this project is rooted in my past several years working and volunteering in social movement organizations for climate, food, and migrant farmworker justice. We changed policies, we built life-changing relationships, and we messed up - working so quickly that we reinforced oppressive power dynamics in our own groups, or working so carefully on building relationships amongst ourselves that we sometimes lost sight of the reason that we gathered in the first place. I spent a year away from college learning about how we can address conflict, harm, and gender-based/sexual violence in social movements with the Community Healing Accountability and Transformation (CHAT) Team and Survivor Justice Team in the Sunrise Movement (with training from the organization Spring Up). We began to study and practice frameworks of accountability and transformative justice. These felt like starting points to hold the messiness of working together inside an oppressive society; speak honestly with each other across a variety of identities and life experiences; and pave paths toward creating a society based on interdependence, sharing, and embracing our common humanity (rather than the hoarding and disposability we saw magnified during the pandemic).

Attempting to document lessons that emerged from these experiences, I needed to ask for help. I had many more questions than insights. I began to speak vulnerably with others and listen to the knowledge and insights they shared - and in particular, I took time to explore what people who have gracefully and fiercely faced apocalypses for years have already documented. As a white person living at the intersection of several marginalized and privileged identities, I am inspired by writer Boyo Akumalade's words "the way is not forward. It is outward." As one part of the outward cycles of listening, learning, trying things, messing up, and learning again, I've created the following zine to document some lessons. It is a compilation of tools and wisdom from organizers, activists, writers, artists, and teachers into a curated journey. It provides questions and guidance in finding our place in apocalyptic times, as individuals, as student groups, as communities, and as social movement organizations.

I originally titled this intro "apocalypse for who," (before I was told that was grammatically incorrect). Anyways, the answer to that question, and the focus of this zine, is apocalypse for you, and whoever you consider to be your people.

RESEARCH PROCESS!



Reading, listening, & informal interviews

This project started as a 500 level Sociology Independent Study at Middlebury College in January 2023. The theme was community building and addressing conflict and harm in social movements. I read several books and articles by authors like Mia Birdsong, Audre Lorde, adrienne maree brown, and Mariame Kaba. I listened to podcasts, attended Middlebury events - including the conflict transformation series, and had about 20 informal conversations with people in my community (student organizers, alumni, Vermont community members, organizers I know outside of Middlebury College, and Middlebury staff and professors).

Art vs Apocalypse

As part of the the Art vs. Apocalypse symposium at Middlebury this spring, my friend/comrade Faith Wood ('24.5) called for students to submit artwork inspired by living in apocalyptic times. In response, I created this zine, putting what I learned in the independent study into a visual pathway -- with questions, ideas, and artwork about working together in times that ask the most of us.

A NOTE ON CITATION

"Citation is how we acknowledge our debt to those who came before; those who helped us find our way when the way was obscured because we deviated from the paths we were told to follow." - Sarah Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*

Many of the ideas in this zine come from Black women and women of color. I have cited all of the sources that I can trace. Please buy and read the books and articles that I cite! This zine attempts to combine these ideas with the wisdom of the Middlebury community members I spoke with -- and tailor them to the Middlebury student community. It isn't a replacement to reading about these ideas from their original sources. Also, you'll notice a lot of adrienne maree brown -- If you're also a fan, consider donating to her patreon to support her continuing to bless us with her brilliance :)

@ <https://www.patreon.com/Endoftheworldshow>

START WITH YOURSELF START WHERE YOU ARE

WHAT DO I
LOVE TO DO?

WHAT ARE THE NEEDS
OF MY COMMUNITY?



WHAT ARE MY SKILLS/
OFFERINGS?

APOCALYPSE ACTIVITY! INSPIRATION ALIAR

Gather materials, photos, plants, poems, and anything that brings you pleasure, joy, spiritual, &/or cultural connection. Use them to guide you in figuring out what community and political work you want to do, and how you want to do it



"Venn Diagram inspired by adrienne maree brown's talk at Dartmouth College (see "Politically Patient at Dartmouth" episode of *How to Survive the End of the World Podcast*)"

When deciding how you want to align your life with the world we are trying to build, ask yourself:

What sustains you? Where do you feel a "yes?" What gives you life? Where does your sense of power come from?

"I have seen, over and over, the connection between tuning into what brings aliveness into our systems and being able to access personal, relational, and communal power" adrienne maree brown, [Pleasure Activism](#)

"For once we begin to feel deeply all the aspects of our lives, we begin to demand from ourselves and from our life-pursuits that they feel in accordance with that joy which we know ourselves to be capable of" - Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic"

RESOURCING AND CARING FOR YOURSELF

How will you care for and resource yourself during this journey?^{*}

Who can you call on for support with challenging emotions and conflict?
Who can you call on to have fun?

How can you ground yourself before, during, and after you do your work? How can you ensure you consistently practice these things?

What are your boundaries around work time, socializing, rest, technology?

"We are the land. We are the land. The health of the land is us. These things are inseparable." Dr. PennElys Draz, NDM Collective



Art by Molly Babbitt

^{*}Some of these questions were inspired by Spring Up's Safety and Self-Care guide.



Art by Ollie Bussard

A NOTE ON SELF-CARE!

The term Self-care was popularized by the Black Panther Party in the 1960s in their work to bring free food and healthcare to their communities, as well as Audre Lorde's declaration of self-care as "an act of political warfare" in her 1988 essay collection "A Burst of Light." Today, it is often used in the wellness industry in the context taking care of ourselves as individuals without communal or political intent. I consider in this zine self-care in the context of this original purpose as a tool particularly of those facing oppression, and as a way to sustain the collective, intertwined with community care. I am investigating in these pages how we can shift our own lives so that they are in line with our values, principles, and a larger shift toward liberation. So that we feel alive, free, and a part of something larger.

SITUATED KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE, & SURVIVAL SKILLS



We all have our own knowledge situated in our particular cultures, histories, bodies, families, communities, and experiences. Trust that your particular knowledge and perspective is valuable to contribute to your work and community!

And, as feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins says about our own partial knowledge, "each group [can] become better able to consider other groups' standpoints without relinquishing the uniqueness of its own standpoint or suppressing other groups' partial perspectives."⁴

How can we find the balance between trusting our perspectives are valuable and knowing they are incomplete?

What does deep listening feel like to you?



APOCALYPSE ACTIVITY!

List the skills, belief systems, cultural knowledges that make you who you are. Can you cook yummy food? Can you identify plants? Are you a good communicator? Think about how you want to bring those skills to your community.

⁴ "Black Feminist Thought in the Matrix of Domination," Patricia Hill Collins, 1990



ACCOUNTABILITY: WHO ARE YOUR PEOPLE?

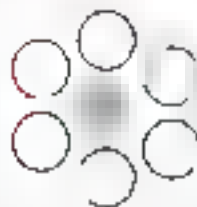
"Civil Rights activist Ella Baker would ask 'who are your people? who are you accountable to in this world?' — abolitionist organizer Mariame Kaba"

"Track the communities, groups, and individuals you are going to give service and be a part of. Megan Brakeley (associate director of the Middlebury College Farm) said to me, 'Liberation is not freedom from responsibility or responsibility, but the ability to enter into these in a choiceful way.'"

"Choiceful is a term she heard adrienne maree brown share on her and her sister's podcast *How to Survive the End of the World*.

POD MAPPING

In the midst of apocalypse it's important we know who we can count on. Mia Mingus and The Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective created the concept of "PODS" in response to how vague the word community can be. Your POD includes the people, groups, who you could count on if you experience harm, violence, or abuse; if you need support taking accountability for harm, violence, or abuse you have caused; or if someone you care about is experiencing harm.



POD MAPPING FORM

Podmapping to help you build your transformative justice network

We do not have the space to name or list

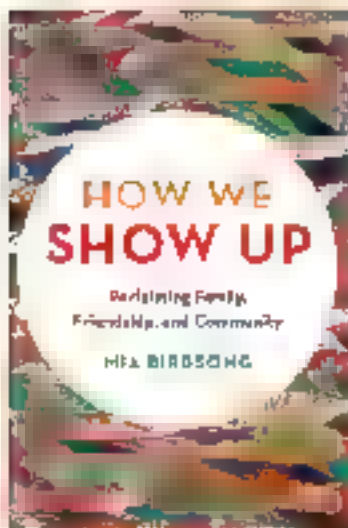


BUILDING RESILIENT & INTERDEPENDENT COMMUNITIES

Definitions of Community

The networks of people with whom we may live, play, work, learn, organize, worship, and connect to each other. —The Creative Interventions Toolkit

A group that shares a story. —The Vermont Real! Collective



Read this book

HOW WE BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES IN APOCALYPSE INSPIRED BY MEI BIRDSONG

Resilience is a characteristic of communities rather than individualism. Places with highest disaster survival rates are those where people are the most connected (22).

Moving away from ideas of the "American Dream" individualism, self-reliance, and trying to be the best in favor of asking for help, mutual caring for each other, & helping each other meet emotional & material needs.

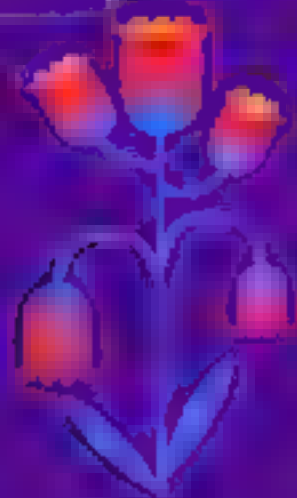
Letting go of a scarcity mindset, there is not enough. "Our Collective survival requires we understand there is enough for all of us, we don't need to hoard resources." (26)

"WE BELONG IN A BUNDLE OF LIFE WE SAY A PERSON IS A PERSON
THROUGH OTHER PERSONS IT IS NOT I THINK THEREFORE I AM IT SAYS
RATHER I AM HUMAN BECAUSE I BELONG I PARTICIPATE, I SHARE"
DESMOND TUTU. QUOTED IN HOW WE SHOW UP (9)



by Mall Reimer

BUILDING UTOPIAS IN THIS WORLD



Now that we've listed our communities, skills, and inspirations, and some characteristics of interdependent community, we can begin the process of building new ways of being with each other at home, in our day-to-day lives

"There is a tension between existing in one world while trying to live in another one. The thing we are trying to get to hold is the key to getting there. Reclaiming and reinventing family, friendship, and community is a process we do with our family, friends, and community" (Mia Birdsong, 226)

"The places we go to escape the distractions and obligations and stressful busyness of our everyday are not where we build ourselves. And it is in the mundane, the hardship, and the messiness of life that what we've built is tested and refined" (Mia Birdsong, 8)

APOCALYPSE ACTIVITY!

Mia Birdsong writes that "creating community is creating culture, practice, ritual, social norms" (25)

List all the communities that you are a part of, whether it's your family, group of friends, political organization, college, cultural or religious community, neighborhood, etc. Pick one that you particularly care about. What are three practices, rituals, and social norms that you would want to establish in that community? Next time you are with people in that community do this activity together.



ORGANIZING AS SCIENCE FICTION ~ ADRIENNE MAREE BROWN

We can build the kinds of worlds we are working toward in our own political/organizing work. What would it feel like if everyone felt inherently valuable in our student and political groups, no matter the amount of work they could contribute?*

*shoutout to Andrés Oyaga for toting through these deos with me

WHAT IS ORGANIZING?

Here are labor organizer Jane Mackleway's distinctions between different kinds of change-making*

Charity. Donating money/items for immediate relief (e.g. natural disaster)

Advocacy. Organizations usually with professional staff (e.g. ACLU, Greenpeace, etc.) advocate for a change usually through communications, lawyers, lobbyists, etc. We may donate to these orgs/sign petitions to advocate on our behalf

Mobilizing. Moving people to action who already agree with the cause (usually to events, rallies, protests, city council meetings)

Organizing: Bringing people into the movement/campaign who do not already agree. These are people who do not usually show up nor consider themselves activists. Organizing means continually expanding the movement and placing the agency for success and decision making powers on this mass base



Activism only demands that you personally take on the issue. Organizing can't exist solo, "because who the hell are you organizing?" If you're organizing, other people are counting on you, but more importantly, your actions are accountable to somebody else."
Marianne Kabe¹

* to Shortcuts p. 6

¹ "We Do This for We Free Us," c. 7

image credit: Seattle Freedom Podcast

SCALES OF CHANGE



1. STRUCTURAL

Changing institutions (corporations, governments, social institutions like race & gender)

For example, 74% of carbon emissions come from 100 companies; the Exxon Mobile and Shell Corporations won't stop digging up oil & coal until they are forced to. Lessons from labor and racial justice movements have taught us we need strong mass movements to cause a crisis for corporations, capital & institutions in order to get them to change.*

Ways to tap in:

- Listen to movement leaders requests for support
- Spread important information to your networks, classrooms, families, workplaces
- Show up to events/rallies
- Bring snacks/water to events!
- Attend meetings
- Join & take on leadership
- Make posters /graphics
- Look to see if movements have resources for supporters/allies
- Give people rides



ECOLOGICAL POLITICS FOR THE WORKING CLASS

Ecological politics for the working class is not about saving the planet or saving the whales. It is about the struggle for a better world, a world where the needs of the people are met, where the environment is protected, and where the working class has a say in the decisions that affect their lives. It is about the struggle for a world where the needs of the people are met, where the environment is protected, and where the working class has a say in the decisions that affect their lives.

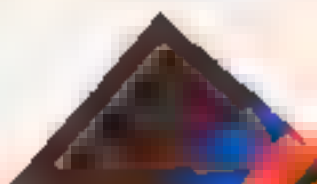
* Ecological Politics for the Working Class: Matt Huber, 1989

SCALES OF CHANGE PII



Note: You can still contribute and support social movements even if you don't have time to become a leader or they are being led by someone else.

I've noticed a lot of people's resistance to getting involved in any capacity because of lack of time or experience, or a feeling that they are not doing enough. If they aren't taking on a lot of work or leadership. You are valuable even if you find smaller ways to support labor, racial justice, environmental justice, etc. organizing!



II. FRACTALS

"How we are at the small scale is how we are at the large scale."
Emergent Strategy Ideation Institute

Fractals are a concept from adrienne maree brown's book Emergent Strategy. We build the world we want by practicing it where we are.

What ways of relating to each other, culture creation, and political work in your own community would you like to eventually see on a large scale? Start there.

III. MUTUAL AID

Mutual aid is a form of self-help where people work together to meet their own needs and the needs of their community. It is a practice of solidarity and collective care. Mutual aid can be used to address a wide range of issues, from food and housing to healthcare and education. It is a way of building power and resilience in the face of systemic oppression.

Not so what movements are growing around you? In VT some examples are:

- Migrant Justice
- Black Lives Matter Burlington
- 350 VT
- VT Workers Center
- Rural VT

CHOOSING WHAT TO WORK ON WITH YOUR GROUP

What work is already being done?

If there is already a group working on what you are interested in, why not join their group rather than starting your own? If you are starting your own, spend some time understanding the work already happening.

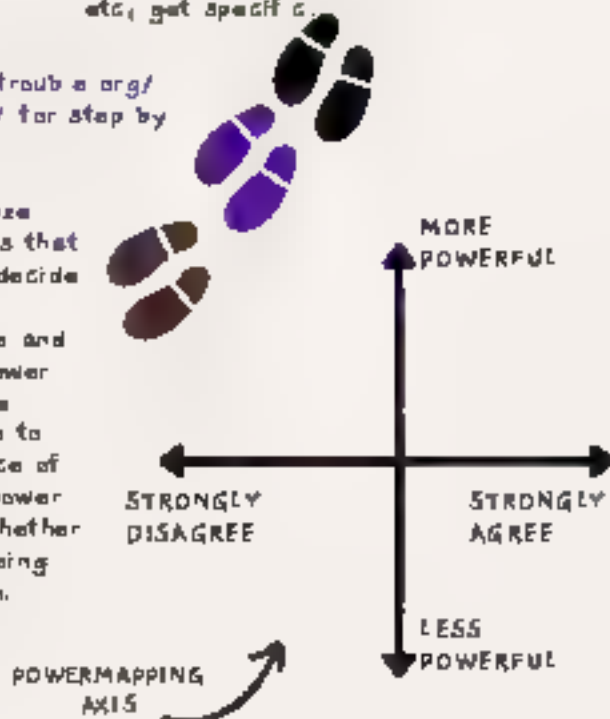


Once you know what you are working toward, whether it is climate just co., racial justice, etc., get specific.

TRY POWER MAPPING!

Check out: <https://basut.futtroub.e.org/toolbox/tool/power-mapping/> for step-by-step how-to.

This process helps you analyze who is influencing the issues that you are thinking about and decide who you want to target in campaigns. Of all the people and institutions that have the power to make the changes you are seeking, you can decide who to focus on based on the balance of whether they have enough power to make real change, and whether they have a possibility of being influenced by your campaign.



(RE)SETTING UP YOUR TEAM

Whether you are setting up a team for the first time or revisiting the structure and culture of your existing group, here are some suggestions from organizers, students, and other creative people I interviewed as well as my own experiences, for anyone doing political and community-based work.

If our group is a meal, what are the basic components?

Relationship building is the building block of any group!! Eat, drink, craft, watch movies, hang out together. After meetings is a good time for this when everyone is already together.

Culture creation! Decide:
- How do you want people to feel in meetings, events, etc?
- How do you want to relate to each other and the work you're doing?

JOY, pleasure & fun keep people coming back (and food)



Be clear on roles and accountability. Even (and especially) if you don't want hierarchy in your group. You don't need official titles, but being clear on the work that needs to be done and who is responsible for it will allow you to more intentionally share leadership and not have too much fall on one or a few people.

Be clear on what your group's goals are and what work you are and are not taking on. Being clear about the scope of your work makes it more inviting, as it is easier to join & know what is happening. Start small! - it creates more ease to take on less & build from there than to start making promises that are hard to keep.

MORE PRACTICES FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY IN OUR GROUPS

CREATE GROUP NORMS

TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER
(HELPING WHEN SICK, MENTAL
HEALTH CHECK INS)

BE FLEXIBLE, ADAPT TO
CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

CREATE COZY & ACCESSIBLE
MEETING SPACES, SHARE
ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

PRIORITIZE
FUN!

TAKE ON WHAT YOU CAN
MANAGEABLY DO

MAKE TIME TO REFLECT

VALUE PEOPLE'S TIME &
MEETING TIME

PAUSE AND
BREATHE EVEN
IN URGENT
TIMES, AVOID A
CULTURE OF
URGENCY

HAVE SPACE FOR REGULAR
FEEDBACK (GROUP &
INDIVIDUAL)

CELEBRATE EVERY TINY
ACCOMPLISHMENT

DECIDE HOW YOU WILL
MAKE DECISIONS

BE TRANSPARENT ABOUT
WHO IS/ HOW YOU ARE
MAKING DECISIONS

REMEMBER & RELAY HISTORY
(I.E. STANDARD MEETING
DOCUMENTS)

*suggestions from interviewees
regarding personal experiences

CONFLICT!

The values required to social repair are the same values required for personal repair. Sarah Schulman, Conflict & Not Abuse

Justice means conflict with historical norms and practices. When our vision for the world is different than the world we are in, then we must be able to work with conflict.



* Art by Kathryn You Mak & Molly Boodin

The dominant culture is conflict avoidant, which is what helps allow oppression to continue. Normalize the idea of conflict in your group.

TIPS ON GENERATIVE CONFLICT WHEN WORKING TOGETHER

*generative conflict: conflict that is functional to enhance creativity and constructive change. Conflict Resolution Education Project

Don't wait until the conflict grows to address it: the most conflict-related advice I've received is to address it EARLY & OFTEN. Address disagreements and conflicts when they are small.



RELATIONSHIPS: Having trusting strong relationships in a group helps prevent disagreements from becoming conflict or conflict from becoming harm.

Establish group norms around conflict: Do you address conflict when it comes up? How do you address it? Having this already established will make it a lot easier when it inevitably surfaces.

Have members reflect: How do you respond to conflict normally? Why? What will you need when it comes up?

Schedule in regular times or methods for group feedback: e.g. at meetings once a month, people can air concerns or maybe you have an anonymous form.

Be cognizant and communicative about power dynamics (organizational rank, race, class, gender, ability). The Identity Project uses the framework of mainstream and margins: supplanting groups to identify which identities, behaviors, and values are mainstream in a group (seen, supported, and which are in the margins (at the edges, not fully integrated, understood). They help those in the margins "negotiate the relationship to power" in the group and those in the mainstream supplant the shift in power.*

*<https://identityproject.org/six-elements>

EXAMPLE CONFLICT PLAN

*From the Community Healing Accountability and Transformation Team of the Sunrise Movement

- 1 REACH OUT TO THE PERSON(S) YOU'RE IN CONFLICT WITH AND ASK TO SPEAK WITH THEM IN PERSON (ABOUT THE CONFLICT)
- 2 MEET WITH THE PERSON YOU ARE CONFLICTING WITH AND NAME YOUR FEELINGS, THE ISSUE(S), AND WHAT YOUR WANTS/NEEDS ARE TO RESOLVE AND RECONCILE
- 3 LISTEN TO THE OTHER PERSON! TALK WITH THEM ABOUT IT
- 4 REFLECT AND CHECK IN WITH THE OTHER PERSON AFTERWARDS

TOOL: PRINCIPLED STRUGGLE*

Conflict or struggle is principled when it aims to deepen our unity, our understanding of each other, and our resolve to fight for our North Star (our overarching goal). It is debate, discussion, and often disagreement grounded in honoring each other's humanity and figuring out what is best for the group's goals.

If you are having a discussion:

- 1 Be clear as a group on your overarching goal / "North Star" which is what you are all working toward together
- Acknowledge that you are in disagreement because you all care about achieving the same end goal
- 2 Name the reasons, experiences, and needs behind each of your positions
- 3 Embrace the risk of disagreement
- 4 Honor collective decisions in order to move forward

"It will take a average consistent time and skill building to achieve mastery in any of these practices. But it is possible to build the collective muscle needed for principled struggle."

Cherokee Caruthers, author of [unapologetic: a Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements](#)

*inspired by a generative conflict training hosted by the Sunrise Pager hub in 2022

TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE



Harm and violence will likely occur in your community in these apocalyptic times and throughout history. We've seen countless harms committed interpersonally and systemically.

Transformative justice (TJ) is a framework to transform harm and violence by addressing the root causes without reliance on incarceration. It is about building communities where violence/harm is unthinkable and when it does happen, there are structures in place for safety, care, and accountability.

Definition by Mia Mingus at the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective: "Transformative Justice (TJ) is a political framework and approach for responding to violence, harm, and abuse. At its most basic, it seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence."^{*}

BASIC COMPONENTS OF TJ

- ✧ Safety and healing for survivors of harm
- ✧ Accountability for the person who caused harm (they take responsibility for ending the violence)
- ✧ Transformation of the conditions that allowed for violence to occur in the first place
- ✧ Addressing harm without use of the state (police/prisons), as it is an abolitionist framework
- ✧ The building blocks of addressing violence are in the immediate community and relationships

LINEAGE ** TJ roots back to all kinds of communities that have created ways to address harm without the state/incarceration. These include women of color, indigenous communities, queer and trans folks, disabled folks, intentional communities, somatics and harm reduction around prisons (ie diversion programs). One notable historical landmark was INCITE!'s The Color of Violence: Violence Against Women of Color conference in 2000.

* Transformative Justice: A Brief Description by Mia Mingus at Transformative Justice Collective

** Language explained in more detail in Spring 2019 Transformative Justice Workbook

*** The following pages of TJ are also informed by personal experience applying TJ to the work of the Survival Justice team of the Sunrise Movement in 2019.

HOW CAN WE BRING THE PRINCIPLES OF TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE INTO OUR GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES?

NOTE: Holding accountability processes takes time. If somebody in your group experiences and/or causes harm, talk to someone with experience if you are thinking about a formal process. However, the basic ideas of transformative justice are available to everyone.

This includes:

- Believing the survivor of violence when they come forward
- Ensuring the survivor is safe and asking about their needs. Compiling a group of people the survivor can call on
- Shifting the burden from the survivor to everyone in the group/community to address the harm, take the harm seriously, and ensure consequences and change
- Compiling a group of people to support the perpetrator to take accountability
- Using the instance of harm to enact long-term change in the culture of the group. What changes need to be made to ensure harm does not happen again?

If your group is part of a larger community where harm occurred but it didn't happen in your particular group (i.e. a student group in a college or a climate group within the larger climate movement) your group can still take responsibility for addressing it. Whether you write a message of support to the survivor, call on the perpetrator to take accountability if they are in a position of power, have conversations about your own group's culture and harm response, you can still follow the survivors' lead in responding.

Resources on accountability

- "The Four Parts of Accountability & How To Give A Genuine Apology" (article by Mia Mingus)
- "10 Tips on Receiving Critical Feedback: A Guide for Activists" (Medium article by Brooke Anderson)
- "6 Tips for Giving Helpful Feedback" (article by Kim Scott on RedcoGardens.com)



From the Creative Interventions Toolkit



Art by Ollie Buzzard

ACTIVITY: RADICAL TRUTH TELLING*

Find a large block of time to have a facilitated discussion within your group about what dynamics can cause harm in the group, as well as which dynamics are most supportive and inclusive. By being upfront about what is harmful, you can be proactive in preventing harm and build community norms around the kinds of relationships/culture you are trying to cultivate.

Questions we need to ask with our groups and communities (written by Mariame Kaba in We Do This 'Til We Free Us)

What does it mean to actually center a survivor who is harmed?

What does it mean to actually support people who have caused harm?

What does it mean to take responsibility for saying, "we refuse in our community to condone when this happens?"

What are we going to create in our communities spaces that allow people the real opportunity to heal?

WE WILL NOT CANCEL US!

Transformative Justice in activist communities

In their book We Will Not Cancel Us, adrienne maree brown argues that Cancel culture mirrors the tendency of the prison system to isolate and punish people – without changing the underlying culture or asking the individual to change their actions. She calls on social movements to move to an attitude that people are not disposable when they make mistakes.

"We will respond not with rejection, exile, or public shaming, but with clear naming of harm; education around intention, impact, and pattern breaking; satisfying apologies and consequences; new agreements and trustworthy boundaries; and lifelong healing resources for all involved" – adrienne maree brown

* Spring Up uses Radical Truth Telling as one of the three pillars of transformative justice along with healing and accountability

EMBRACE IMPERFECTION

We are "building a million different little experiments, just building and trying and taking risks and understanding were going to have tons of failure" - Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement

Perfectionism is a characteristic of White Supremacy Culture (article written by Tema Okun). Building a world in the midst of apocalypse will mean practicing and trying things that don't work, apologizing and trying again.

Activity: Choose a characteristic of White Supremacy Culture & think/draw/write about what your group/work (or your school, city, family) would be like if it were to let go of that characteristic and embody an alternative. If it already does embrace an alternative, draw/write about what that looks like!

Check out Team
Akun's new book in
website format!
<https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info>



art by Melanie G.S. Waboy from
whitegumpgmaeye.culture.info

RESOURCES

ORGANIZATIONS, STRATEGY, AND CONFLICT

"Building Resilient Organizations" - an article by Maurice Mitchell on ForgeOrganizing.org

Emergent Strategy by adrienne maree brown

Holding Change: The Way of Emergent Strategy Facilitation and Mediation by adrienne maree brown

"Wildfire Project Conflict Assessment Tool"
<https://wildfireproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Public-website-conflict-culture-assessment-Aug-2020.pdf>

Secrets of a Successful Organizer by Alexandra Bradbury, Jane Slaughter, and Mark D. Brenner

TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

We Will Not Cancel Us: And Other Dreams of Transformative Justice
by adrienne maree brown

TransforHarm.org

Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement - Edited by Leah Lakshmi Piepza-Samarashina & Ejeris Dixon

We Do This 'Til We Free Us by Mariame Kaba

Fumbling Towards Repair: A Workbook for Community Accountability Facilitation by Mariame Kaba and Shira Hassan

"Creative Interventions Toolkit: A Practical Guide To Stop Interpersonal Violence" (free PDF download <https://www.creative-interventions.org/toolkit/>)